1) *Central Texas Student Futures Project* research, part of broader Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce (GAC) initiative:

- Ongoing (2005-2013) partnership of Ray Marshall Center, GAC and 11 ISDs, touching 84% of area high school seniors

- Longitudinal analysis of student-level education and workforce records, including student exit surveys linked to secondary, postsecondary education and labor market outcomes data

2) *National research literature*
Model of Factors Affecting College Enrollment & Work

Source: B. Levy & C. King, Central Texas Student Futures Project Conceptual Model (2009).
Getting TO College

First, review *factors* statistically associated with enrolling in 4-year and 2-year institutions.

Then, identify particular *strategies* for increasing college enrollment rates in both 4- and 2-year institutions.

Highlight results for key groups, especially *low-income, Hispanic* and *first-generation college students*.

➤ Factors and strategies vary by type of college and population group: *one-size-fits-all approaches unlikely to succeed.*
District Composition of 2009 Graduates (SFP)

- San Marcos: 33%
- Austin: 33%
- Hays: 20%
- Del Valle: 11%
- Eanes: 12%
- Leander: 6%
- Pflugerville: 4%
- Manor: 2%
- Round Rock: 4%
- Bastrop: 4%
- San Marcos: 33%
- Austin: 33%
- Hays: 20%
- Del Valle: 11%
- Eanes: 12%
- Leander: 6%
- Pflugerville: 4%
- Manor: 2%
- Round Rock: 4%
- Bastrop: 4%
Composition of Graduates  
(2007 SFP Districts)

Hispanic and low-income shares gradually increasing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Class of 2007</th>
<th>Class of 2008</th>
<th>Class of 2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>9,410</td>
<td>10,452</td>
<td>10,793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Income Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Low-income</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Special Education</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Postsecondary Enrollment of Central Texas HS Graduates, Fall Following Graduation, by College Type, Ethnicity and Income Status (2007 SFP Districts)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrolled Graduates (%)</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-Year</td>
<td>4-Year</td>
<td>2-Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall denominator</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not low-income</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Ethnicity
  - Asian: 21% (2007), 57% (2008), 20% (2009*)
  - Black: 23% (2007), 35% (2008), 22% (2009*)
  - Hispanic: 22% (2007), 22% (2008), 23% (2009*)
  - White: 23% (2007), 49% (2008), 22% (2009*)

* Income Status
  - Low-income: 21% (2007), 19% (2008), 20% (2009*)
  - Not low-income: 23% (2007), 47% (2008), 23% (2009*)
  - Unknown: 21% (2007), 12% (2008), 22% (2009*)

* Overall denominator includes 100 students who lacked enough information to link to NSC records; 62% reflects the best possible rate using NSC and THECB data.
Percent of 2009 Graduates Enrolled in Fall 2009, by College Type and District (N=11,993)
Percent of 2009 Graduates Enrolled in Fall 2009, by Location and District (N=11,993)
**Major factors increased enrollment odds by 50% or more. No factors reduced enrollment odds by more than 50%.”
Major 4-Yr Enrollment Factors, Selected Populations (Class of 2007)

- **Hispanic graduates**: many key factors the same but strength varied. Strong curriculum and FAFSA very important; males more likely to enroll; parental education and visiting campuses not significant.

- **Low-income graduates**: far fewer significant variables. Curriculum and Top 10% most important.

- **First-generation graduates**: Top 10% increased enrollment odds by 400%; college entrance exams, 8th grade high school math credit also important; curriculum not significant for this group.

**For all graduates, uncertainty about borrowing money for college reduced 4-yr enrollment odds.**
Major Factors Linked to 2-year Enrollments
(Class of 2007)

Fewer factors statistically associated with odds of 2-year college enrollment.

- None increased the odds of 2-year college enrollments by more than 50%.
- Graduating in the Top 10% of the senior class reduced the odds of enrolling in 2-year colleges by more than 50% for all groups.
- Never thinking about college as an option reduced 2-year enrollment odds by more than 50% for surveyed graduates overall, but not for the various groups.
Effective College Enrollment Strategies

- Various **college preparation activities**—college enrollment counseling, taking college entrance tests, completing college applications, applying for FAFSA—improve college enrollments for all (SFP & Tierney et al. 2009).

- Ensuring students **take a rigorous curriculum** and **excel in school** also effective for most (SFP & Tierney et al. 2009).

- **Reducing student mobility** critical: students changing high schools even once far less likely to go on to college (SFP).

- **Making college more affordable** critical as well. Because most Texas high school graduates attend in-state colleges, **affordability of state schools** also key to increasing college enrollment rates for all students, but especially for low-income, Hispanic and first-generation students (SFP).
Effective Strategies ...

National and Texas research suggest additional strategies to increase college enrollments:

- **Participation in extracurricular activities**, especially sports or music (Rumberger & Arellano, 2007; King et al. 2007; Schexnayder et al. 2009)

- **Enrolling in dual-credit, college-like and AP courses** (Quint et al. 2008; Bailey et al. 2003; Karp et al. 2007, 2008; Roderick et al. 2006; Adelman 1999; Klopfenstein & Thomas 2005)

- **Making college part of a student’s ‘individual life plan’** via guidance counselor interactions and other actions (Quint et al. 2008)

- **Surrounding students with adults and peers who build and support their college aspirations** (Tierney et al. 2009)

- **Providing integrated support services/counseling**, especially for those enrolling in 2-year colleges (Grubb 1996)
Texas Strategies

- **Pathways Projects** in San Antonio, Houston and El Paso, staffed by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, but regionally designed and tailored (https://share.thecb.state.tx.us/sites/Pathways/). Components: data analysis/research; vertical alignment teams; and evaluation.

- **Austin Partners in Education, Communities in Schools, Con Mi Madre, Skillpoint Alliance**, other nonprofits working in schools to foster college and career readiness and boost postsecondary enrollments in various ways.

- **Early college high schools**.
  Initial results appear promising. Rigorous evaluations of these strategies not yet conducted/completed. Groundwork underway for some evaluations.

- **Greater Austin Chamber’s comprehensive ongoing strategy** merits further consideration ...
**Goal:** Increase direct-to-college enrollments by 20,010, to a rate of 64% by 2010.

Now, aiming for a direct-to-college enrollment rate of 72% by 2015.
Chamber Strategy

**Bottoms up, for leadership, focus and energy**
- Austin Community College Connection
- Financial Aid Saturdays
- Common Application to college
- College readiness assistance for seniors

**Tops down, focusing local education leaders on college readiness**
- Create College Enrollment Managers positioned in each high school in the region
- Advocate for college readiness in state accountability
- Pilot Strategic Compensation and other initiatives
- Create, foster real-time management tools (e.g., Common Application, FAFSA, Student Futures Project)
Metro Austin Direct-to-College Enrollment Rate Up 9 Points

Source: Student Futures Project, THECB, 2003-2009
* Estimate
Getting THROUGH College

First, examine recent persistence experience for 2- and 4-year colleges in Central Texas.

Note: research on persistence and completion and the factors and strategies known to increase them not as well developed. Student Futures Project work on persistence/completion still underway.

Then, identify effective strategies for boosting persistence and completion rates for 4- and 2-year. Factors and strategies likely to vary by type of college and population group: **one-size-fits-all approaches unlikely to succeed.**
# Persistence One Year Out, Class of 2007 (SFP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Enrolled Within a Year of Graduating</th>
<th>Persisted to Fall of 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent of Graduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>6,313</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1,360</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>3,739</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3,212</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3,043</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Family Income Status</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Low-income</td>
<td>915</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Low-income</td>
<td>5,205</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial Enrollment Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-Year Institution</td>
<td>2,706</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-Year Institution</td>
<td>3,607</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial Enrollment Location</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In State</td>
<td>5,539</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of State</td>
<td>774</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research underway on 2- and 4-year college persistence and completion, including Student Futures Project, MDRC, Urban Institute and Community College Research Center.

- National studies point to series of important factors (shown at right).
- Limited access to detailed college participation data (e.g., Dev Ed) constraining Texas research.

**Positive Factors**
+ Parental postsecondary education
+ GPA
+ No. of math, dual-credit and AP classes
+ AP test scores
+ Took college entrance exams
+ Scholarships and grants
+ Parental financial support
+ Cultural social capital
+ Freshman learning communities
+ Pass college-level math/writing courses
+ Completing various credit thresholds
+ Earnings an associates degree

**Negative Factors**
- Non-Asian minority
- Low-income
- Working fulltime
- Reliance on loans
- Starting at a 2-year college
- Entering academically unprepared
Getting BEYOND College

Most of those needing postsecondary education and training already working and well past traditional schooling age: 56% of Austin/Round Rock MSA residents 25+ years of age lack a post-high school degree or certificate.

While public workforce funding falling and access to financing for adults pursuing postsecondary help difficult, proven strategies for success include:

- **Sectoral workforce strategies via workforce intermediaries**
- **High-skills workforce development services**
Workforce Strategies

- Longitudinal research finds “tipping point” for earnings for students obtaining a year of college credit plus a credential or certificate (Prince and Jenkins, 2005).

- **Sectoral training** implemented by workforce intermediaries with community/technical colleges and other organizations in high-skill, high-wage occupations a key strategy for improving postsecondary success, nationally (Maguire et al., 2010) and in Texas (Glover and King, 2010; Smith et al. 2009, 2010).

- The **$25M. Every Chance Fund** enacted by 81st Texas Legislature via the Comptroller’s Office fostering sectoral training via intermediaries across Texas.

- **Large, lasting statistically significant earnings impacts** for Capital IDEA, highly successful local workforce intermediary, illustrative…
Capital IDEA
Earnings Impacts

Source: Smith, King & Schroeder (forthcoming 2011).
High-skill Workforce Training Strategies

Analysis of Texas data shows that workforce development—especially intensive skill-building—yields larger returns on investment (ROI) for participants (individuals and employers), taxpayers and society. High-skill, high-wage strategies typically entail skills training conducted via community and technical colleges.

5-Year Costs and Returns for Texas Workforce Services

Source: King et al. 2008
Concluding Observations

- Focusing on college preparation activities can improve postsecondary enrollments for all groups.
- Experience in recent economic downturn shows other strategies likely needed for groups traditionally under-enrolling in college.
- Financial aid—especially for low-income, Hispanic and first-generation students—critical.
- Need to explore promising interventions for low-income and Hispanic students and better understand relationships between education, training and career pathways. Center work starting up with TWC with funding from USDOL.
- Evidence on factors and strategies for college persistence/completion less well developed. Similar factors apparent, but more rigorous research needed.
- Proven workforce strategies (e.g., sectoral, high-skills) known but under-funded.
For More Information

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